THE

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☞ Separate paging is given to this Part in order that it may be filed as a separate compilation.

PART IV.

Miscellaneous Papers.

No 1.

Extract from the Proceedings of the Government of India, in the Department of Revenue, Agriculture, and Commerce, dated Calcutta, the 4th February 1879.

[AGRICULTURE AND HORTICULTURE.]

READ—

Despatch from the Secretary of State, dated the 7th February 1878, No. 29 (Statistics and Commerce).

Letter to the Governments of Madras, Bombay, and the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces, British Burma, and Mysore, Nos. 97—102, dated the 21st March 1878.

Letter from the Chief Commissioner of Mysore, No. 196—3 R., dated the 11th April 1878.

Letter from the Chief Commissioner of British Burma, No. 707—269, dated the 11th April 1878.

Letter from the Government of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, No. 1358 A., dated the 20th May 1878, and enclosure.

Letter from the Government of Bombay, No. 3066, dated the 17th June 1878.

Letter from the Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces, No. 2868—136, dated the 22nd July 1878, and enclosures.

Letter from the Government of Madras, No. 1425, dated the 4th September 1878, and enclosures.

Read also—

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 584, dated the 23rd February 1877.

Letter to the Government of Bengal, No. 91, dated the 4th May 1877.

Letter from the Government of Bengal, No. 1595, dated the 26th May 1877.

OBSERVATIONS.

IN his despatch dated the 7th February 1878, the Secretary of State noticed an experiment at the Nagpur Model Farm in 1876-77, where, in consequence of irrigation and manuring, Jelalia wheat produced 1,600 lbs., and white-eared wheat 2,200 lbs. acre, the average yield per acre in the country being only about 400 lbs. The the produce at Nagpur was estimated at Rs. 60, while the cost of cultivation, in expenses, was given at Rs. 10 per acre. His Lordship desired to be informe

are taken in the above and other provinces to impart to the agricultural community generally the lessons to be learnt from the operations of the model and experimental farms;" and observed, "as in many cases these farms appear to involve financial loss, it is the more important that their results, when satisfactory, should be utilized to the utmost for the general good of the country."

2. A copy of this despatch was circulated on the 21st March 1878 to the Governments of Madras, Bombay, and the North-Western Provinces and Oudh, and to the Chief Commissioners of the Central Provinces, British Burma, and Mysore, with a request for a report in connection with the farms maintained under their orders.

3. In Mysore, the Chief Commissioner states that no general steps have hitherto been taken in the direction indicated, the condition of the province during the past two or three years having forbidden any such measures. Mr. Harman, the Superintendent of the Bangalore Farm, has recently been authorized to make tours in the province twice in the year, once in the summer when the *ragi* crops are being sown, and again during the winter months when the crops are being reaped, in view to his acquiring practical experience in the native systems of agriculture and imparting to the ryots by personal communication and by experiments the benefits of deep ploughing, as also the advantages to be gained by the use of improved seed. The Chief Commissioner has also under consideration a scheme for placing one or two plots of land in each district under the charge of a village patel or other suitable person, who would cultivate the land in accordance with instructions from Mr. Harman. "By this means," the Chief Commissioner observes, "it is hoped that the ryots will have an opportunity, which the location of the Government Farm at Bangalore does not afford them, of judging of the results to be obtained by a better system of farming." Since these remarks were written, however, it has been decided to abolish the Bangalore Farm and to transfer the services of Mr. Harman to the Bombay Presidency.

4. In Burma, the only Government Farm is one established at Myouktoung in the Arakan Hill Tracts for the purpose of growing and curing tobacco. As regards the cultivation of tobacco on the low lands lying along the banks of rivers, the natives have but little to learn: the farm was started with a view of testing the capabilities of soil in up-land tracts, and more especially for the purpose of teaching the people an improved method of curing the leaf; but there has not been time to judge of the results as yet.

5. Mr. Buck, Director of Agriculture and Commerce, North-Western Provinces and Oudh, in reporting on the subject, refers to that portion of the minute recorded by Sir John Strachey in November 1874, proposing the formation of a Department of Agriculture in the North-Western Provinces, in which it was suggested that a good means of reaching the agricultural community would be by experiments in the estates under the Court of Wards. This suggestion, it is said, has been carried into effect, though not to so great an extent as was desired, in consequence of the drought of 1877. To some estates, however, improved English ploughs, improved sugar-mills, and selected seeds were sent; and in some districts, where the local officers took an interest in agricultural matters, seed and implements were distributed to estates other than those administered by the Court of Wards. As a further means of introducing improvements to the notice of the agriculturists, Mr. Buck lays great stress on the advantages of agricultural fairs; and he proposes to give greater encouragement to such fairs in future years. No attempts seem to be made by the Local Government to bring directly to the notice of the natives the results of the experiments conducted on the State Farms.

There are two Government Farms in the Bombay Presidency, one at Bhadgaon ...sh and the other at Salaru in Sind. At Salaru nothing has as yet been done in ...irection; but the Superintendent proposed making a tour in the cold weather ... which he would acquire and diffuse useful information. He is to report

the results of his first tour, in order that the Government of Bombay may be in a position to judge of the desirability of repeating the experiment.

At Bhadgaon, too, little appears to have been attempted. The Superintendent reports that instruction is imparted through farm apprentices, farm servants, and visitors. The system of apprentices, if carefully worked, would no doubt prove useful; but nothing can be expected from farm servants as a means of imparting agricultural information to the native community. Mr. Stormont, the Superintendent, recently visited Madras and Bangalore, under authority from the Government of Bombay, with a view to ascertain the system followed on the farms at those places; and he was instructed to report the result of his enquiries on his return to Khandesh.

The Local Government has also, after consultation with Mr. Robertson of the Sydapet Farm, decided on commencing a system of agricultural education in the Deccan, and probably, in due course, the Bhadgaon Farm will be made subsidiary to the scheme of instruction.

7. In the Central Provinces, Major Macdougall, the Superintendent of the Nagpur Farm, proposes to publish the results of "any decidedly successful experiment" in the *Rural Gazette*, a paper printed in Hindi, Mahrathi, and Urdu by the Educational Department, of which a copy is sent to every Government School in the Central Provinces. The Chief Commissioner approves of this proposal; but such a means of making known the operations of the farm seems scarcely to be what is required, the record of these experiments being useful to the agricultural community only when they can be followed and explained on the farm on which they have been tried.

8. In the Madras Presidency, good and useful work is being done under the supervision and guidance of Mr. Robertson, the Superintendent of Government Farms. Attached to the Sydapet Farm, on which experiments of various kinds are tried, is an Agricultural College, in which a complete course of agricultural instruction is afforded, and which is intended eventually to accommodate upwards of one hundred students. In view to a further diffusion of information, Mr. Robertson has proposed the establishment of small agricultural experimental stations all over the Presidency, each being placed in charge of a trained agriculturist, who is also to conduct an elementary agricultural class. This scheme is, however, at present in abeyance for want of funds.

Recently, a very interesting ploughing competition was held at the Sydapet Farm, in which European, American and native ploughs were used, the competitors as well as the visitors from different parts of the country being very numerous. Such open competitions as these afford an efficient means of interesting neighbouring cultivators in the methods and processes of the improved system of agriculture practised on the farm. The public reports shew that the exhibition was watched with very great interest and was completely successful.

9. From the facts summarised above, it may be said generally that only in the North-Western Provinces and Madras is any real effort being made to teach agricultural reform to the people. In the North-Western Provinces, a Department of Agriculture and Commerce has been created, with a Director at its head, whose special duty it is to organize the collection of agricultural and commercial statistics; to direct experiments for agricultural improvement in model farms and elsewhere; to watch and report on the progress of trade, and to suggest in what directions it may be developed, or hindrances to its prosperity removed; and to investigate facts connected with the condition of the agricultural classes. The scope and objects of the Department are clearly explained in minute recorded by Sir John Strachey in November 1874, to which the attention Local Governments and Administrations was drawn in the letter from this D dated the 11th August 1875, Nos. 11—426-433, regarding the collection of statistics.

In Madras there is a Department, which, though not as yet formally recognized as a Department of Agriculture, is practically one, with an efficient and well qualified Director at its head; but its expansion has hitherto been greatly impeded by various causes, not the least among which has been the want of funds.

10. In other provinces very little is being done, nor as matters stand can much be expected. Experimental farms indeed, when they stand alone, are of comparatively small utility. To be really useful they should be part of a system of agricultural instruction; they should be attached to a school where sound agricultural instruction is conveyed in class, and they should be the field for carrying into practice in the presence of students the theories of which the reasons have been explained to them in the class-room. If the students are taken from the classes dependent on the land for their living, satisfactory progress in the diffusion of agricultural instruction under such a system will soon be apparent. It is with much satisfaction that the Government of India has watched the recognition of these principles in Madras and the efforts that are being made there gradually to mature a complete system for their application in practice. The scheme for action in the same direction which has just been proposed by His Excellency the Governor of Bombay is also gratifying as indicating the interest taken in the matter by the Government of that Presidency. In other provinces much cannot be expected under the present system, though, defective as it is, the farms, if they are carefully and intelligently managed, intelligently supervised, and placed on a substantial and permanent basis, must gradually do good, and the Government of India desire again to commend the subject very earnestly to the attention of Local Governments and Administrations. Bengal especially is a province which is singularly deficient in opportunities for agricultural instruction, while it is perhaps of all Indian provinces the one where a reform of practice is most needed. It is also the province of whose agricultural resources and capacities the governing body knows least. It is a matter of more than ordinary importance that the cultivating and wealthy land-owning community in this great province should be taught to realize the advantages of a better agricultural practice, and that steps should be taken to remove the reproach which now exists that the very elements of agricultural information, such as the average yield of particular crops in particular soils, are wholly absent. Efforts in this direction were made some years ago by Sir George Campbell; but these efforts, though well intentioned, were frustrated by radical errors in the selection of sites for farms, as well as in the selection of Superintendents. The results were so unsatisfactory that the farms were broken up one after the other, the last being abolished in 1877, on the ground that all the attempts which had been made to teach agriculture to the people of the country had ended in failure. This conclusion was not accepted by the Government of India, and it is desirable in connection with the present question that the views then expressed to the Government of Bengal should be brought prominently before other Local Governments and Administrations. In the letter from the Government of India to the Government of Bengal dated the 4th May 1877, No. 91, it was said:—

"His Excellency in Council is by no means prepared to admit that, because it is not necessary at present to teach to the natives on a scientific basis all the technicalities of the highest farming, there is therefore no opening for instruction of a highly useful, if of a more modest kind, adapted to the present educational and agricultural standard of the country. His Excellency in Council is unable to agree with His Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in the opinion that the attempts of the Government to teach agriculture to the people have failed everywhere. Where these attempts have failed, as at Poosah, failure has been the result of inefficient management; but where ordinary care and attention have been intelligently given to the subject, it is unquestionable that, as at Sydapet in the Madras Presidency for instance, good results have ensued.

It is not necessary to employ specially qualified agricultural chemists for the purposes contemplated by Government in the establishment of model or experimental farms. The objects of the farms have been frequently stated, but they have been well and briefly summarised by Sir John Strachey in the following extract from his Minute of the 28th November 1874, proposing the creation of a Department of Agriculture and Commerce in the North-Western Provinces:—

" 'The object of these model farms should be three-fold: first, to obtain complete information, based on actual facts, as to the average productiveness of different crops on the different classes of soil on which they are ordinarily cultivated, and the cost of cultivation; secondly, to establish and prove to the native agriculturists the advantages to be gained from small improvements, such as they are able themselves to carry out under existing conditions, such as deeper ploughing, economical use of canal water, selection of seed, &c.; thirdly, to make experiments as to staples and industries which it may be possible to introduce if new, or to familiarize and improve if already existing in the country. The extension of sericulture, the improvement of indigenous fibres, and the manufacture of a finer class of tobacco, may be mentioned among the objects of such experiments.' "

"It is to these objects that attention should be particularly directed. It is evident that lessons in such matters, especially under the second head, and instructions in such details (important though they are) as the proper storage and application of the manures ordinarily employed in the country, shewing experimentally how they may be made to retain all their fertilizing elements, of which much is now wasted, the proper treatment and breeding of live stock, the improvement of the implements employed, and other similar matters, may as successfully be imparted by an energetic man of fair intelligence, possessing an adequate practical knowledge of modern farming (and consequently having such knowledge of agricultural chemistry as is essential to the successful pursuit of modern farming), as by a professional chemist of high scientific attainments.

"The Governor General in Council is convinced that lessons of this kind are urgently needed, and that if measures for the elementary instruction in such matters of the agricultural community are persevered in by the Local Governments (without whose cordial co-operation nothing can be done), they cannot fail after a reasonable time to have very considerable effect upon the cultivators in the neighbourhood for the Government farm and through them upon others further away."

11. The excellent results which have followed the creation of a Department of Agriculture and Commerce, in the North-Western Provinces, in the impulse which has been given by it to agricultural enquiry and improvements, indicate perhaps the best form in which Government action can be directed to the promotion of the objects in view. With the establishment of such a Department in each province (and it is maintained in the North-Western Provinces entirely from provincial funds) the extension of the system, whether by agricultural instruction in schools, or by practical teaching in experimental farms, or where means are available by a combination of both, could be regulated under efficient control and advice according to the particular requirements or circumstances of each province. From this point of view the Governor General in Council will be glad to learn that the matter has again received from the Government of Bengal and other Local Governments and Administrations the consideration which its importance merits, and he would wish to be informed at an early date of the results of that consideration.

ORDER.—Ordered, that the above Resolution be communicated for information and guidance to the Local Governments and Administrations noted in the margin, and for information to the Secretary of State for India.

Government of Madras.
" " Bombay.
" " Bengal.
" " the North-Eastern Provinces and Oudh.
" " the Punjab.
Chief Commissioner of the Central Provinces.
" " " British Burma.
" " " Assam.
" " " Ajmere.
" " " Mysore and Coorg.
Resident at Hyderabad.

ORDERED also, that a copy, with a copy of the letter from the Government of Madras, dated the 4th September 1878, No. 1425, and enclosures, be forwarded to the Famine Commission, and that the Resolution be published in the *Supplement to the Gazette of India.*

(True Extract.)

A. O. HUME.
Secretary to the Govt. of

Mysore Government Press, Bangalore—1879.